

Prophecies Concerning the Israel (3)

Graham G. Thomason

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The Jews, who are the descendants of Abraham Isaac and Jacob, consisting of twelve tribes, are to be a great nation and a source of blessing to all nations (see Genesis 12:2). They are, according to Zechariah 2:8, the apple of God's eye. God will bless those who bless them and curse those who curse them (Genesis 12:3).

Can there be any doubt about Israel's future? Consider the following (NKJV text, divine pronouns capitalized):

Romans 11:1-11:2a

I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew.

Jeremiah 31:35-37

Thus says the LORD,
Who gives the sun for a light by day,
And the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night,
Who disturbs the sea,
And its waves roar
(The LORD of hosts *is* his name):

“If those ordinances depart
From before Me,” says the LORD,
“*Then* the seed of Israel also shall cease
from being a nation before Me for ever.”

Thus says the LORD:

“If heaven above can be measured,
And the foundations of the earth searched out beneath,
I will also cast off all the seed of Israel
For all that they have done,” says the LORD.

Jeremiah 33:19-26

And the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying,

“Thus says the LORD; ‘If you can break My covenant with the day, and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season,

‘then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, My ministers.

‘As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the descendants of David My servant, and the Levites who minister unto Me.’ ”

Moreover, the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying,

“Have you not considered what these people have spoken, saying,

‘The two families which the Lord has chosen, He has also cast them off? Thus they have despised My people, as if they should no more be a nation before them.

“Thus says the Lord: ‘If My covenant is not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of the heaven and earth,

‘then I will cast away the descendants of Jacob and David My servant, *so* that I will not take *any* of his descendants *to be* rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For I will cause their captives to return, and will have mercy on them.’ ”

It is true that there have been many periods in the Jews’ history when, due to some form of apostasy, they were temporarily set aside by God and delivered into the hands of the Gentiles. This includes the current period of *lo-ammi* - “not My people”, Hosea 1:9 - which has obtained since Acts 28:28 and is also temporary. But it is certain that they still have a glorious future. They will yet recognize their Messiah (Jesus Christ) after He has saved them from their enemies’ attempts to cut them off from being a nation (Psalm 83:4) and from the Gentile armies attacking Jerusalem (Zechariah 12:9). The Jews, who I think will already have come to believe in their Messiah (Malachi 4:6) will be filled with a spirit of grace and supplication (Zechariah 12:10) and will mourn for Him Whom they pierced, as one mourns for an only son. But it is a time of comfort for the Jews because their iniquity is pardoned and it is pointed out that they had received a very unfair amount of punishment (double) for all their sins (Isaiah 40:1) at the hands of the Gentiles (Zechariah 1:15).

After this comes a tremendous dispensation of peace. Revelation 20:2-3 tells us that Satan is bound for a thousand years so that he should deceive the nations no more - hence the term "millennium". The prophets and Psalms have a lot to say about life about this period but I can only give a flavour of it now and show the prominence of the Jews at that time.

This is a period when Christ rules directly. Isaiah 9:6-7 (RAV) reads:

For unto us a Child is born,

Unto us a Son is given;

And the government will be upon His shoulder.

And His name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of His government and peace
There will be no end,
Upon the throne of David and over his kingdom,
To order it, and establish it with judgment and justice
From that time forward, even for ever.
The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.

The law will go out from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:3; Micah 4:2). War will be impossible. Isaiah 2:4 (cf. Micah 4:3) reads:

He shall judge between the nations, and shall rebuke many people: they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Nature will be wonderfully restored - see Isaiah 11:6-9. The Jews will be pre-eminent, ruling over many nations but the nations will not rule over them (Deuteronomy 15:6). The Gentiles will be eager to learn about God from a Jew, if they can get hold of one, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you" (Zechariah 8:23).

Let us Gentiles, who have heavenly blessings in Christ far above all principality and power (Ephesians 1:3; 2:21) speak well of the Jews, in contrast to the world at large which has shown them a lot of hatred, and even now is treading down Jerusalem and will continue to do so until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled (Luke 21:24).

The author is not attempting to conceal facts such as the role of the Jews in the crucifixion, but let us remember the Gentile role (Pilate), the view that God takes as Father - He did not spare His own Son (Romans 8:32), and the view of the Son in John 10:18: "No-one takes it (i.e. *My* life) from Me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again". Moreover, the Jews have forgiveness for the crucifixion because they didn't know what they were doing (Luke 23:34 and cf. Isaiah 40:1; 43:25). Their current *lo-ammi* status has nothing to do with the crucifixion but is associated with events described in Acts, culminating in Acts 28:28.

The Jews' alleged responsibility for the crucifixion has been used as grounds to incite and justify horrific persecution. Evil men have judged and remorselessly executed, supposedly on behalf of God, the distant descendants of those who did not know what was going on, and whom as a nation God wishes to forgive. The result has been the murder of "the apple of God's eye" throughout the centuries. Let us in contrast then, along with our Lord, see the Jews as a nation that is to be forgiven and rejoice in their future blessings, in the bond of peace - whether they be at this moment of the household of God or not.